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RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBU #0765 1552016  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 032016Z JUN 08  
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1244  
INFO RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC  
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC  
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE USD FAS WASHINGTON DC  
RUEHC/DEPT OF LABOR WASHINGTON DC  
RHMFIUU/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL  
RUCNMR/MERCOSUR COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS BUENOS AIRES 000765

SIPDIS  
SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [ECON](#) [ENRG](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [AR](#)  
SUBJECT: CODEL DODD MEETING WITH NGOS HIGHLIGHTS CIVIL SOCIETY  
CONNECTIONS

11. (U) This cable contains sensitive information - not for internet distribution.

12. (SBU) Ambassador Wayne hosted Senator Christopher Dodd (D - CT) and Congressman Xavier Becerra (D - CA) at an event featuring key individuals and organizations representing Argentine civil society. The group discussed topics ranging from the scourge of drugs to increasing transparency in government. Several NGO participants remarked that further development of civil society in Argentina is essential, given a lack of GOA presence or insufficient GOA investment in crucial areas like education and law enforcement. Participants also expressed their appreciation for the embassy's efforts to support and encourage their work, such as the successful NGO Fair which Ambassador Wayne hosted in April.

13. (U) Participants included Vivian Perrone of Madres del Dolor (an NGO that provides legal advice to parents whose children died under violent circumstances); Bob Hannan of Help Argentina (a nonprofit organization that assists a network of NGOs and promotes best practices); Gaston Chillier of CELS (Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales, an NGO focused on human rights and democratic institutions); Guillermo Correa of RACI (Red Argentina para Cooperacion Internacional, a network of civil society organizations that encourage international cooperation); Moira Rubio Brennan of PH15 (a foundation that uses photography workshops to help under-privileged youth); Beatriz Lobo and Maria Rosa Gonzalez of Madres del Paco (a group of women combating the "paco" cocaine paste epidemic); Silvia Guasco of Fundacion Conciencia (an NGO which encourages civic participation through education); Miguel Braun of CIPPEC (Centro de Implementacion de Politicas Publicas para la Equidad y el Crecimiento, a think tank dedicated to issues of social policy, transparency, and public management); Silvina Vatnick of CEF (Centro de Estabilidad Financiera, a think tank focused on financial sector issues); and Rafael Velazquez of FPHV (Fundacion Pro Humanae Vitae, dedicated to strengthening civil society and promoting development).

14. (SBU) Several NGO representatives expressed deep frustration with the GOA's perceived fixation on the Dirty War era and lack of interest in the current problems which plague Argentina. Vivian Perrone of Madres del Dolor asked, "Why are our human rights focused on things that happened thirty years ago when we continue to lose our children to violence?" Maria Rosa Gonzalez of Madres del Paco stated that she believes President Fernandez de Kirchner does not care about the poor families faced with rampant drug use and its aftereffects.

15. (SBU) COMMENT: Codel Dodd's meeting with NGO representatives contributed further to the already strong relationship that the embassy enjoys with many civil society organizations. The NGO participants clearly appreciated the opportunity to interact with Senator Dodd and Congressman Becerra, particularly given their oft-expressed perception that their own elected representatives

generally do not appear to care overly about the issues that concern them.

16. (U) Senator Dodd cleared this cable.